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the Fox and the Hound
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WALT DISNEY PRODUCTIONS'

the Fox and the Hound

This is the story of THE FOX AND THE HOUND.
You can read along with me in your book.
You will know it is time to turn the page
when you hear the chimes ring like this . . .

LET'S BEGIN NOW:

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The sun was barely up when Widow Tweed started the chores around her little farm. She milked the cow, fed the chickens, then began to hang the laundry out to dry. Suddenly, the pile of clothing moved! The widow lifted a blanket, and there was a frightened little fox. "Oh, you poor thing, you've lost your mama. Well, don't worry, I'll take care of you."

Just down the winding country road lived a hunter named Amos Slade. One day he came home with a surprise for his dog, Chief. It was a hound dog puppy named Copper. "He's just a little runt now, Chief, but he'll grow. He's for you to look after from now on!"

Widow Tweed loved having a new member in the family. "You're such a little toddler, I'll call you Tod. But it's time to do my work now, so you run along and play."

Tod scampered outside and wandered off into the woods. He saw two funny-looking birds trying to catch a caterpillar. Tod made a face. "A worm for breakfast! Yecch!"

At Amos's house, Chief was teaching Copper to be a hunting dog. "Hey there, Copper, what are you sniffin' at?"

"I don't know, Chief. Something I never smelled before. I want to find out what that smell is."

"Okay, Copper, but the master ain't gonna like you wanderin' off!"

Copper sniffed his way into the woods. He followed his nose right to the log where Tod was sitting.

"Whatcha smellin'?" asked the little fox.

"I don't know yet. Why, it's . . . you! Aroorooroo!"

"What did you do that for?"

"We're supposed to do that when we find what we've been trackin'."

"I'm a fox. My name's Tod. What's your name?"

"Mine's Copper. I'm a hound dog!"

"Gee, I bet you'd be good playing hide and seek. Want to try it, Copper?"

Tod bounded off as Copper began to count. And so, the two youngsters laughed and played the day away.

Now, some people will tell you that a fox and a hound could never get along. But Tod and Copper didn't know that!

"You're my very best friend."

"And you're mine, too, Tod."

"And we'll always be friends, forever. Won't we?"

"Yeah, forever!"

The next day Copper didn't come out to play. Tod found him tied to his barrel house. "My master says I gotta stay home. And it's no fun, neither!"

"Well, we can play around here then."

"Oh, no, not with ol' Chief over there. He can get awful mean. He's cranky!"

Tod crept into Chief's barrel. "Gee whillikers! Is he ever big! Wow, look at those teeth."

"Oh, don't go in there!"

Suddenly, Chief's eyes popped open. "A fox!"

Chief charged after Tod, scattering chickens in every direction.

Amos Slade was so angry he stormed over to Widow Tweed's house. "Your thievin' fox was after my chickens!"

"I don't believe it! Tod wouldn't hurt a thing!"

"If I ever catch him at my place again, I'll blast him!"

When the cold winds began to blow, Amos loaded his traps and gun into his truck. "Well, Copper, ol' Chief and I are gonna teach you all about huntin'."

Over the long winter, Copper grew big and strong. He loved hunting. In no time at all, he was sniffing out animal tracks, even in the deep snow.

Soon spring came again. Copper, Chief and Amos chugged back down the country road toward home.

Tod was glad to see his old friend returning. "I'll go see Copper tonight after Chief and Amos are asleep."

"Copper. Psst! Hey, Copper! It's me, Tod!"

"Hi, Tod. Gee, it's great to see you. But you shouldn't be here. If Chief wakes up, we'll both be in trouble."

"I--I just wanted to know if we're still friends!"

"Tod, those days are over. I'm a huntin' dog now!"

Just then, Chief woke up. "It's that fox again!"

Tod fled from the yard and hid in a woodpile. He shivered as he saw Chief and Amos run past. "After him, boy! Don't let him get away!"

Copper's keen nose led him right to the woodpile. "Tod, I don't want to see you get hurt. I'll let you go this one time!"

Tod escaped by running across a high railroad trestle. But there, blocking his path, was Chief. At that moment, a speeding train rounded the corner. Tod ducked between the rails. But Chief was bumped off the tracks. He tumbled down the steep cliff to the river below.

When Widow Tweed heard what had happened she looked sadly at Tod. "I'm afraid it's not safe for you to live here any longer."

In the morning, the widow took Tod to a game preserve deep in the forest. She gave Tod one last hug, then sadly drove away.

Poor Tod was frightened and alone. It began to rain. All the other animals scurried to their warm homes, but Tod had no place to go.

Finally Tod found a nice, warm den. Unfortunately, it belonged to an angry badger. He chased Tod right back out into the rain. Tod spent a miserable night in the forest.

But in the morning, things looked brighter. Tod met a beautiful girl fox named Vixey. She thought Tod was the most handsome fox she'd ever seen. "I just know you're going to love the forest. Let me show you around!"

Vixey made Tod feel right at home. Tod knew he was going to like living in the forest, after all!

Meanwhile, Amos and Copper were in the forest, too. They were setting traps to catch Tod. "That fox will be coming right through here. Then we'll get him!"

As Amos set the last trap, a huge bear loomed up before him! Amos stumbled backwards, right into one of his own traps!

With a mighty swipe, the bear slapped the gun from Amos' hand. Copper tried to protect his master. Fearlessly he lunged at the huge bear! With a single powerful blow, Copper was knocked to the ground.

Tod heard Copper's howl and ran to help his childhood friend. Leaping on the bear's back, he bit and scratched wildly. Tod escaped onto a log, high above a raging river. The bear was close behind. But the bear was too heavy for the old log. It split in half! Both animals plunged into the river below.

Tod struggled to shore. There was Amos, aiming right at him. Copper limped in front of the hunter's gun. "Come on, Copper. Get out of the way!" But the hound refused to leave his friend.

Finally, the hunter lowered his gun. "Okay, Copper, I understand. Let's go home."

Copper started to follow Amos toward home. After a few steps, he looked back at Tod, and then smiled goodbye. They both knew that a fox and a hound couldn't live together, but they would always be the very best of friends.

Sometimes, on warm summer nights, Tod and Vixey would leave the forest and climb a hill overlooking Copper's house. As Tod looked fondly down at his friend, the voices of a little fox and a little hound seemed to echo in the breeze.

"Copper, you're my very best friend."

"And you're mine, too, Tod."

"And we'll always be friends, forever."

"Yeah, forever."

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That is how little Mowgli, the Mancub, came to be brought up by jungle animals. He was a favorite with all the wolf cubs of the pack. They treated him just like a brother wolf. Mowgli even made friends with the elephants and often
marched in their Elephant Patrol. He loved living in the jungle.
Although Mowgli did not know it, I would often watch him from a distance to make sure he was safe. You see, the jungle also holds many dangers.

These illustrations are intended as samples only. They do not necessarily appear in this book.

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